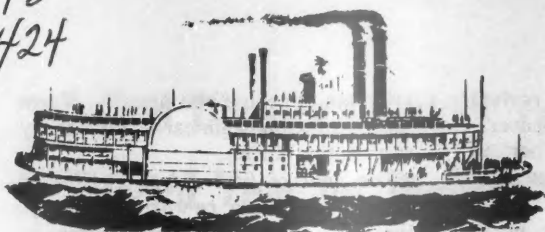


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RIVER CURRENTS

SECOND COAST GUARD DISTRICT - DECEMBER, 1979

Coast Guard Training Pays off at Roadside Accident

by LT William Gibbs

Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) training can pay off any time of the day. GM3 Mel Turner of MSO St. Louis discovered this recently while on the way to work. A motorist had stopped on the highway, and been struck by another car. BM3 Turner came to the aid of the injured person. He told the uninjured driver of the car that struck the accident victim to direct traffic around the accident while BM3 Turner

examined the injury. He determined that the man was suffering from a compound fracture of the lower leg, and his identification of the injury help to speed treatment for the victim, who was taken by ambulance to a nearby hospital. Well done, BM3 Mel Turner!

Editor's note: (BM3 Turner's EMT training was Coast Guard sponsored at a local junior college. See last month's River Currents on continuing your education in the Coast Guard.)

River Currents welcomes the following personnel to the 2nd District: MK2 D. E. White, ANFAC Paris; FNMK J. A. Collins, MSO Minneapolis; SS2 L. A. Singer, CGC SUMAC; FNMK R. E. Herdon, CGC OBION; SK2 P. M. Stretch, CCGD2; ETCS R. H. Monroe, Group Lower Mississippi River; DC3 J. D. Grant, ANFAC Chattanooga; BMC M. M. Dobrin, CCGD2; MK1 D. L. Davenport, CGC Lantana; MK3 M. E. Todtenbier, ANFAC Sallisaw; RM2 W. L. Brown, CCGD2.

Where Have All The Buoys Gone?

by LTJG D. M. Manning

Over the past year the Coast Guard has experienced a shortage of unlighted buoys for use as aids to navigation on the Western Rivers. The shortage was, in part, the result of unusually harsh environmental conditions during the past two winters and the increasing incidence of collisions with buoys by towboats. Although the buoy shortage is past (we hope) and measures taken to increase buoy inventories throughout the Mississippi River System, the number of buoys lost to collisions will probably remain high or continue to spiral upward. Why does the problem rear its ugly head today and not thirty years ago? A little history...

In days gone by there were fewer towboats plying the Western Rivers than there are today. These boats were primarily shallow draft packets or small, low-powered towboats. The rivers were not improved nor the channels stabilized nearly to the state that they are today. Revetment work was minimal and many of the wing-dams and dikes that are so common today were not in existence.

The boats then ran at slower speeds and since they were smaller and their external propulsion and steering hardware of comparatively insubstantial construction, the pilots regarded buoys (steel or wooden), as adversaries best not encountered, if at all possible. The buoy manufacturing process of old was not as refined as it is today, hence the buoys were made of a heavier gauge steel and posed a threat of damage if collided with. As time progressed the Army Corps of Engineers improved the river channels and stabilized much of the Mississippi River System to the point where larger, deeper draft vessels could ply most waters year-round. With the increase in size and draft came increases in horsepower to control the larger payload as well and the resultant gargantuan external propulsion and steering hardware.

Today, more than ever, time means money to maritime transportation interests and the pilot in charge of a vessel. With the companies on the pilots' backs urging them to make the best time possible, with the bigger tows that are more difficult to handle (despite

proportionate increase in the size of external hardware), with more towboats on the river fighting for space, and with less fear of the damage that a buoy might do to one's tow, the pilot now has less reason to fear running over or hitting the channel marker. The buoys, although foam-filled, are thinner skinned than in the past, and get crushed or slashed and, eventually, fill with water and sediment and sink.

The result is obvious. Buoys will continue to be lost to collisions unless something can be done to discourage the towboat operator from running over the buoys or until the Coast Guard comes up with a revolutionary buoy able to withstand repeated collisions. (Some of the best minds in the Coast Guard are at work looking for a solution. Point-detonating buoys have been ruled out). Neither the revolutionary buoy nor the river pilot who dodges aids like his life depended on it will come into being immediately, so ANFACs and WLR crews seem destined to continue "chasing the drifters", "dragging for divers", and cursing the bad drivers.

Wrapping up

Wrapping presents is on most people's mind around Christmas, but there is another kind of wrap that people who work and live around cold water ought to be concerned with: the hypothermia wrap. The wrap is based on a babies diaper, and was first suggested by the wife of one of the members of the 5th District's boating safety detachment. The wrap is illustrated in the photographs. It works as a good first aid measure to help warm victims of hypothermia, or acute loss of body heat.

Another thing to remember about cold weather first aid is that things are not always as they seem; a cold water drowning victim may look dead and act dead; but thanks to something called the

diving reflex, they may be revivable. The diving reflex was first discovered in whales porpoises, and other sea-living mammals. It helps these animals stay under water long periods of time by "closing off" blood vessels in their extremities and pumping more blood into the heart, lungs and brain of the animal.

Recent research shows that people have a diving reflex as well as whales. One child was revived after almost thirty minutes immersion, WITH NO BRAIN DAMAGE. The old rule of first aid that said after four minutes the brain was dead is turning out to be hogwash.

What does this mean to you? You might recover someone from the water this winter who seems to be dead, but you should go right ahead with your

attempts to revive him anyway. Warm the victim, and begin cardio-pulmonary resuscitation (CPR).

The goal of first aid to victims of hypothermia is to re-warm the body. However, if the re-warming process is not carefully controlled, the victim's condition may actually worsen. This is because the blood vessels to the extremities, the arms and the legs, have been "shut off" with the blood being rerouted to the body's core. If all parts of the body are warmed at the same time, the blood vessels allow cold blood trapped in the arms and legs to return to the body's core, which may actually lower the victim's body temperature.

Ideally, the trunk is warmed first, then the legs and arms. The hypothermia wrap allows first aiders to accomplish this in the field.



2nd District Football Takes Trophy: 2nd Year for District 11 Champs

The jackhammer defense of the 2nd District 11 bashed their opponents to quivering jelly this year, but the offense couldn't seem to accomplish much more than getting their uniforms grass stained.

"We haven't allowed more than three touchdowns in one game, but unfortunately, we haven't scored more than two," explained team member YN2 Bob Woolsey.

The Coast Guard pigskin pushers broke their three touchdown jinx in the

championship play-offs. The 21-0 romp saw two touchdowns scored by SK2 Frank L. "Octane" Wright and one by SK3 Mike Jones. That puts the league third place trophy in the 2nd District case.

Unfortunately, the flag football season at Granite City hasn't been quite as successful for the 11 from the 2nd. Their last game there ended in an 18-6 humiliation.

But it would be a little greedy to take home more than one trophy in a year.



LTJG Tom Ducote falls back to pass, while SN David Gotier holds back the defense the only way he knows how. (Photo by SN Dave Graf)



SK2 Frank Wright (alias Octane) goes for the goal, as the defense goes for him. (Photo by: SN Dave Graf)

Eating at CGC OBION

Eating at CGC OBION is about to become a gourmet experience. One of their cooks just completed a special training program with a St. Louis area hotel.

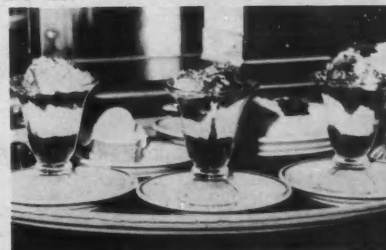
SNSS Carl Mofte was the first 2nd District Subsistence Specialist to graduate from the new training program. In cooperation with the Marriott hotel, SNSS Mofte studied under an internationally known French chef, Francis Motts, who operates the Marriott kitchens. During his 30-day apprenticeship, SNSS Mofte learned everything from the preparation of gourmet sauces and pastry cooking to short order cookery, portion control, and even ice sculpture.

"The people have been the best part of my experience here," SNSS Mofte said. "It's not just that I've learned a lot, but I think I'm faster at the things I already knew how to do."

The program is an unusual one, and the agreement between the 2nd District and the Marriott Hotel is elaborate, but it boils down to this: the Marriott trains the Coast Guard Subsistence Specialists and provides them with one meal a day, and the Coast Guard provides one skilled Subsistence Specialist to work in the Marriott kitchens for 30 days.

"The best part about the training we are getting is that it's virtually free," smiled Master Chief Subsistence Specialist V. M. Seriosa, the enlisted supervisor and originator of the program.

The program is voluntary, and the basis for selection to be trained at the Marriott includes many different factors: performance in the field, CO's recommendation and level of experience are just a few. Questions about participation in the program can be answered by SSCM V. M. Seriosa, commercial telephone #314-425-4647, or FTS 279-4627.



Some samples of SNSS Mofte's work.

(More pictures on page 4)



The District Commander's Corner

When I assumed command of the Second District on June 9, 1979, I established a goal of visiting all district units within the first six months of my tour. I expect to achieve that goal with a few exceptions. My sole purpose for setting such a fast pace is to enable me to meet the people who are carrying the ball at the field units and to see the conditions under which they are working and living. Of course, I am also interested in the material conditions of the ships and stations. However, during my visits, I have placed "people issues" before "equipment issues" in my order of priority. As many of you know, I have

had meetings with all assigned personnel and their wives whenever possible during my visits. I have been most impressed with the frank and constructive comments, questions and suggestions which have been passed to me. That is the only way that we can make progress—and participate in improving things. Please be assured that the notes taken during those meetings will be reviewed and acted upon as soon as practicable. I am pleased with the willingness to participate on the part of Second District personnel.

What are my conclusions, to date, based on my visits? Obviously there is good news and bad news. The good news is that you are doing a fine job. Many small units are required to perform important duties under difficult conditions with minimal supervision. I am pleased with what I have seen. Keep up the good work. The bad news includes a number of people related items

—difficulties with CHAMPUS, lack of commissary and exchange facilities in many areas, pay-related and administrative matters, and the scarcity and high cost of housing for both Coast Guard families and single personnel. My staff and I are attempting to resolve those problems over which we have control. Some are being passed to Coast Guard Headquarters where the Commandant and his staff are doing their very best to seek a solution. Others cannot be readily solved without legislative relief, which, as you know, is difficult to achieve. Please be assured, however, that all levels in the Coast Guard are doing their best to support you. In the near future I will pass along to you a progress report on some of the items which you brought to my attention.

Again, you are doing great work. The Second District team certainly knows how to get the job done! I'm glad to be a part of that team.

Eating (from page 4)



SNSS Mofte displays his certificate of course completion while (Left to right) Francis Motts; CDR J.D. Adams, chief of 2nd District Comptroller Division; CWO4 L. M. Luzader, assistant chief budget and review branch; and SSCM V. M. Seriosa, originator of the training program; look on.



SNSS Mofte looks a little apprehensive as internationally-known master chef, Francis Motts, checks his work.

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